

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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BERTRAM P. BROWN, M.D., Director

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GUY P. JONES
EDITOR

Investigation of Lead Poisoning Hazard in Lead Mining



In the mining of lead ores, workers are exposed to dusts containing varying percentages of lead, which, if inhaled in large quantities or during extended periods of time, are capable of causing chronic cumulative lead poisoning. As in all industries which are vital to National defense, the health protection of workers is an essential factor in the maintenance of uninterrupted production. The working ability of persons who are suffering from early lead poisoning is impaired long before they reach the stage of complete disability.

At the request of the management, and in cooperation with the Bureau of Accident Prevention of the State Industrial Accident Commission and the local public health authorities, a detailed investigation of the potential health hazard involved in mining lead ores was made by the Industrial Hygiene Service of the California State Department of Public Health in a California lead mine during the month of March. This study included quantitative atmospheric determinations of the concentration of lead dust present at the breathing level of the workers in the mine and assay office, and complete medical examinations of all employees who are exposed to lead. Since the earliest evidences of pathological lead absorption are manifested by blood changes and by the appearance of lead in the urine,

blood counts were made on each of the workmen, and samples of urine were obtained from a number of employees for analysis in our laboratory.

The medical, engineering, and laboratory findings developed by this investigation will be correlated in an effort to identify those locations in which a definite lead poisoning hazard is present, and will serve as a guide in the application of practical control measures.

The officials of the mine have indicated their willingness to cooperate in the correction of any conditions in their establishment which may be revealed by these studies as being detrimental to health.

OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE REPORTS

During the month of March epidemiological investigations were made in two aircraft factories and an instrument factory, from which cases of illness of occupational origin were reported recently to the State Industrial Accident Commission. These diseases included bronchitis due to the inhalation of chromic acid vapors, conjunctivitis due to welding rays, and heat exhaustion. In each plant, company officials and employees were advised concerning practical methods for the control of these hazards and the prevention of further cases of illness from the same sources.

OCCUPATIONAL DUST STUDY IN JUTE MILL

In compliance with a request received from the State Board of Prison Directors and the Warden, a detailed study of working conditions was made during March in the jute mill at San Quentin Prison to determine whether the health of men working in the mill is jeopardized by their exposure to jute dust. A series of dust counts made in various locations throughout the mill revealed that microscopic dust particles capable of reaching the alveoli of the lungs were not present in sufficiently high concentrations to constitute a lung fibrosis hazard. However, it was found that in the vicinity of the breaking and carding machines and the bale-breaking operations, the atmosphere at the breathing level of workers was contaminated with large quantities of jute dust particles in a size range above five microns in diameter. Since the continued inhalation of organic dust particles of this size results in mechanical irritation of the mucous membranes of the nose and upper respiratory tract, and may cause such disorders as asthma in allergic or hypersusceptible individuals, general ventilation of the entire workroom, and local exhaust ventilation of the major dust-producing operations, have been recommended to prison officials.

CARBON MONOXIDE FROM UNVENTED GAS HEATERS

A number of deaths have been caused by inhalation of carbon monoxide escaping from gas heaters which were not equipped with vents to conduct the products of combustion to the outside atmosphere. Carbon monoxide asphyxiation is a potential health hazard wherever unvented appliances burning carbon-containing fuels are used, due to incomplete combustion of the fuel. At the request of the San Joaquin Local Health District, atmospheric tests were made in a residence just outside the Stockton city limits to determine whether carbon monoxide escaping from an unvented gas heater was responsible for the death of one person and the serious illness of another. Quantitative carbon monoxide determinations made under conditions duplicating those which existed at the time of the fatal accident revealed that within a period of two hours after the gas heater was lighted, sufficient carbon monoxide accumulated to cause death by asphyxiation after less than an hour's exposure.

"A health commissioner is a John the Baptist, who recognizes that his only mission is to prepare the way for a greater than himself."—Anon.

CONSULTATION SERVICES IN INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE

In response to inquiries on industrial hygiene subjects which were received during the month from other State agencies, industries, labor unions, local health officers, and other interested organizations and individuals, technical reports and recommendations were prepared on the following subjects:

The control of cyanide vapors from plating tanks; dermatitis in fish canneries; health hazards in pottery manufacturing; dermatitis due to glass wool insulating material; personal respiratory protective devices for spray painters; occupational health hazards in wineries and dry cleaning establishments; maximum safe concentrations of industrial dusts, gases, vapors and fumes; fumigation and sterilization of bedding; industrial medical, and nursing services; preemployment and periodical physical examinations; nontoxic school chalks and crayons; Industrial Hygiene activities in California defense industries; diagnosis and prevention of industrial lead poisoning; and other subjects.

SYPHILIS HIGH AMONG JAIL INMATES

A high percentage of infections with syphilis is reported from a survey conducted among all inmates of the Sacramento City Jail and the Sacramento County Road Camp. Dr. Herbert F. True, Health Officer, and Dr. Russell Frantz, Venereal Disease Control Officer, summarized the results as follows:

1. 412 jail inmates in Sacramento City and County were examined serologically. 14.8% had a positive serologic test on the basis of a single examination, and 1.7% had a doubtful serologic test.
2. 19.7% of those persons with a positive serologic test admitted previous knowledge of their infection.
3. 16.4% of those persons with a positive serologic test admitted a history of gonorrhea but no history of syphilis.
4. 29.6% of the entire group admitted no previous serologic examination. 18.8% of this group had a positive serologic test.
5. 16.9% of the entire group had had a serologic test during the preceding three months, 7% during the preceding three to six months, 6.3% during the preceding six to nine months, 2.4% during the preceding nine to 12 months, and 37.8% prior to the preceding 12 months.
6. 27.9% of the entire group admitted a history of gonorrhea. 3.5% of this group had Gram negative intracellular diplococci in the prostatic fluid.

"Without health life is not life; it is only a state of languor and suffering, an image of death."—Rabelais.

SULPHATHIAZOLE

Of outstanding importance to general well-being and public health is the comprehensive investigation conducted throughout the State of the distribution and sale of an adulterated drug, sulphathiazole, manufactured by Winthrop and Company, New York. In error, phenobarbital had been substituted for sulphathiazole, resulting in a product potentially dangerous to whom administered. This is due to the variance in dosage of the drugs respectively.

Because of the emergency nature of this ominous occurrence, the entire resources of the bureau were extended in cooperation with the United States Food and Drug Administration in an effort to seize all tablets bearing code series M.P.

All inspectors were detailed to check each and every sale of this product by Winthrop and Company to every wholesale drug firm in California. In turn all invoices bearing above code were scrutinized and the sales which were made to doctors, drug stores, and hospitals were followed up to the ultimate consumer.

The enormity of the task can be appreciated when it must be considered that several weeks' invoices were checked. Since the investigation commenced March 29, 1941, immediately upon receipt of information relative to this calamitous occurrence, completion of the investigation has not yet been effected at present writing. A compilation of material facts should be available in the report to follow later.

REVISED LIST OF REPORTABLE DISEASES**Reportable Only:****Anthrax**

Botulism—if commercial product notify State Department of Health at once.

Coccidioidal Granuloma

Dengue—keep patient in mosquito free room.

Epilepsy**Food Poisoning**

Glanders—report by phone or telegraph.

Jaundice—infectious or epidemic types.

Malaria—keep patient in mosquito free room.

Pneumonia—specify type of pneumococcus, if known.

Relapsing fever**Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever****Tetanus****Trichinosis****Tularemia****Undulant fever****Reportable and Subject to Isolation:**

Epidemic diarrhea of the newborn (in institutions)

Chickenpox

Dysentery—Amoebic

Dysentery—Bacillary—specify type, if known.

German Measles

Influenza

Measles

Mumps

Ophthalmia Neonatorum

Psittacosis

Rabies—in animals. Use special card.

Rabies—in humans.

Septic Sore Throat (in epidemic form).

Trachoma

Tuberculosis—use special card.

Whooping Cough

Syphilis—use special card.

Gonorrhea—use special card.

Chancroid—use special card.

Lymphopathia Venereum—use special card.

Granuloma inguinale—use special card.

Reportable and Subject to Quarantine and Placarding:

Cholera—report by telephone or telegraph to State Department of Health.

Diphtheria

Encephalitis (Infectious)—specify type, if known.

NOTE: This means all forms of acute encephalitis such as St. Louis type, equine type, and any other epidemic form occurring in California.

Leprosy

Meningitis (due to the meningococcus).

Paratyphoid Fever—specify type A or B.

Plague—report by telephone or telegraph to State Department of Health.

Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis

Scarlet Fever

Smallpox

Typhoid Fever

Typhus Fever

Yellow Fever—report by telephone or telegraph to State Department of Health.

MORBIDITY**Complete Reports for Following Diseases for Week Ending April 26, 1941****Chickenpox**

1340 cases: Alameda County 6, Alameda 4, Albany 1, Berkeley 18, Emeryville 1, Oakland 137, Piedmont 2, Pleasanton 3, San Leandro 2, Plymouth 1, Butte County 1, Contra Costa County 4, Fresno County 31, Fresno 24, Sanger 4, Imperial County 4, Kern County 21, Bakersfield 12, Delano 2, Corcoran 2, Los Angeles County 143, Alhambra 2, Burbank 12, Compton 1, Covina 1, El Monte 3, Glendale 9, Hermosa 10, Inglewood 8, Long Beach 32, Los Angeles 98, Monrovia 8, Montebello 5, Pasadena 25, Pomona 8, Redondo 1, San Fernando 4, Santa Monica 9, Whittier 3, South Gate 3, Monterey Park 3, Bell 1, Madera County 1, Madera 1, Marin County 1, San Anselmo 6, Merced County 3, Merced 7, Monterey County 5, Orange County 13, Anaheim 2, Brea 2, Fullerton 5, Huntington Beach 1, Orange 3, Santa Ana 4, La Habra 4, Tustin 1, Auburn 2, Corona 5, Riverside 1, Palm Springs 4, Sacramento County 24, Sacramento 142, San Bernardino County 3, Needles 2, Ontario 15, San Bernardino 1, San Diego County 17, National City 4, San Diego 86, San Francisco 114, San Joaquin County 25, Manteca 1, Stockton 22, San Luis Obispo County 26, Paso Robles 1, San Luis Obispo 2, San Mateo County 1, Burlingame 5, Redwood City 2, San Bruno 10, Atherton 1, Santa Barbara County 1, Santa Maria 3, Santa Clara County 10, Palo Alto 1, San Jose 10, Shasta County 2, Siskiyou County 2, Solano County 5, Sonoma County 4, Santa Rosa 14, Stanislaus County 8, Modesto 5, Tulare County 11, Exeter 1, Lindsay 1, Tuolumne County 1, Ventura County 2, Yolo County 11, Davis 1, Winters 1, California 1.*

Diphtheria

20 cases: Oakland 1, Piedmont 1, San Leandro 1, Fresno 1, Los Angeles County 3, Long Beach 1, Los Angeles 2, Pomona 1, Santa Monica 2, Modoc County 1, Laguna Beach 1, Riverside 1, San Francisco 2, Stanislaus County 1, Ventura County 1.

German Measles

1276 cases: Alameda County 5, Alameda 10, Albany 2, Berkeley 39, Emeryville 1, Hayward 5, Oakland 14, Piedmont 11, Amador County 3, Plymouth 1, Fresno County 11, Fresno 12, Eureka 2, Kern County 6, Bakersfield 1, Taft 1, Susanville 1, Los Angeles County 104, Arcadia 4, Burbank 5, Claremont 1, Compton 6, Culver City 1, El Monte 7, Glendale 23, Hermosa 1, Huntington Park 5, Long Beach 46, Los Angeles 57, Manhattan 1, Monrovia 7, Montebello 10, Pasadena 20, Pomona 4, Redondo 2, San Fernando 4, San Gabriel 1, San Marino 4, Santa Monica 3, South Pasadena 11, Whittier 3, Lynwood 1, South Gate 3, Maywood 2, Bell 2, Madera County 4, Marin County 1, Mill Valley 2, San Anselmo 4, Monterey County 13, Carmel 3, King City 3, Monterey 4, Pacific Grove 2, Salinas 1, Napa 1, Orange County 33, Anaheim 20, Fullerton 7, Huntington Beach 7, Orange 3, Santa Ana 10, Seal Beach 9, La Habra 1, Laguna Beach 1, Placentia 1, Plumas County 4, Riverside County 4, Corona 2, Elsinore 10, Perris 2, Riverside 3, Sacramento County 3, Sacramento 24, Ontario 2, Redlands 1, San Bernardino 5, San Diego County 70, Chula Vista 14, Coronado 1, El Cajon 4, Escondido 22, La Mesa 3, National City 7, Oceanside 2, San Diego 150, San Francisco 47, San Joaquin County 10, Lodi 1, Stockton 9, San Luis Obispo County 18, Arroyo Grande 2, Paso Robles 25, San Luis Obispo 23, San Mateo County 1, Burlingame 2, Redwood City 1, San Bruno 2, San Mateo 5, Santa Barbara County 23, Lompoc 3, Santa Maria 12, Santa Clara County 42, Palo Alto 1, San Jose 1, Santa Cruz County 3, Santa Cruz 1, Watsonville 2, Shasta County 3, Siskiyou County 21, Dunsmuir 4, Solano County 4, Sonoma County 14, Petaluma 6, Santa Rosa 24, Turlock 1, Trinity County 1, Tulare County 1, Exeter 1, Ventura County 1, Yolo County 1, Davis 5.

Influenza

272 cases: Albany 1, Berkeley 1, Butte County 3, Kern County 137, Los Angeles County 96, Burbank 1, Long Beach 5, Los Angeles 18, Pasadena 1, Sierra Madre 1, Sacramento 1, Ontario 1, Chula Vista 1, San Jose 3.

Measles

455 cases: Alameda County 2, Alameda 3, Berkeley 1, Oakland 8, San Leandro 1, Butte County 1, Chico 4, Gridley 1, Martinez 1, Pittsburg 1, Del Norte County 1, Fresno County 2, Selma 1, Humboldt County 1, Kern County 16, Bakersfield 2, Los Angeles County 37, Arcadia 1, Claremont 2, El Monte 2, Glendale 6, Glendora 1, Huntington Park 6, Inglewood 1, Long Beach 1, Los Angeles 49, Monrovia 6, Montebello 1, Pasadena 1, Pomona 2, Santa Monica 1, Bell 7, Chowchilla 1, Marin County 3, San Anselmo 1, Merced 2, Monterey County 24, Napa 3, Orange County 1, Placentia 1, Placer County 1, Colfax 1, Plumas County 3, Riverside County 1, Beaumont 3, Corona 2, Hemet 1, Indio 1, Palm Springs 1, Sacramento County 13, Sacramento 5, San Bernardino 3, San Diego County 6, Chula Vista 1, Coronado 2, San Diego 4, San Francisco 7, San Luis Obispo County 3, Arroyo Grande 1, Paso Robles 1, San Luis Obispo 10, San Mateo 1, Santa Barbara 1, Santa Clara County 1, Palo Alto 1, San Jose 1, Shasta County 18, Redding 15, Sierra County 1, Siskiyou County 62, Yreka 18, Solano County 3, Vacaville 1, Vallejo 2, Sonoma County 1, Santa Rosa 1, Sutter County 1, Corning 1, Red Bluff 31, Tulare County 3, Tulare 2, Oxnard 2, Yolo County 1, Davis 1, Winters 1, Woodland 2, Marysville 1.

Mumps

1091 cases: Alameda 10, Albany 1, Berkeley 3, Oakland 22, Piedmont 1, Chico 2, Contra Costa County 4, Martinez 25, Walnut Creek 1, Fresno County 4, Fresno 4, Kern County 45, Bakersfield 4, Delano 7, Los Angeles County 133, Alhambra 1, Arcadia 1, Burbank 4, Compton 2, El Segundo 3, Glendale 14, Glendora 2, Huntington Park 2, Inglewood 13, Long Beach 8, Los Angeles 104, Monrovia 8, Montebello 4, Pasadena 7, Pomona 8, Redondo 3, San Gabriel 1, Santa Monica 2, Whittier 4, South Gate 1, Monterey Park 1, Maywood 5, Bell 13, Madera County 4, Madera 28, Monterey County 5, King City 2, Salinas 1, Napa 1, Orange County 18, Anaheim 3, Fullerton 5, Huntington Beach 7, Orange 6, Santa Ana 12, Seal Beach 1, La Habra 17, Placer County 1, Plumas County 7, Riverside County 18, Corona 8, Riverside 1, Indio 3, Palm Springs 2, Sacramento County 4, Sacramento 2, North Sacramento 1, San Bernardino County 16, Ontario 3, San Bernardino 3, San Diego County 18, Chula Vista 2, El Cajon 1, La Mesa 21, National City 4, Oceanside 7, San Diego 158, San Francisco 54, San Joaquin County 7, San Luis Obispo County 5, San Luis Obispo 1, San Mateo County 1, Santa Barbara County 7, Lompoc 6, Santa Barbara 31, Santa Clara County 8, San Jose 3, Santa Cruz County 1, Shasta County 13, Redding 10, Siskiyou County 5, Dunsmuir 1, Solano County 1, Vacaville 3, Santa Rosa 1, Stanislaus County 16, Sutter County 1, Corning 8, Trinity County 5, Tulare County 3, Exeter 1, Ventura County 18, Fillmore 1, Santa Paula 4, Ventura 3, Ojai 3, Winters 1.

Pneumonia (Lobar)

48 cases: Oakland 4, Antioch 1, Martinez 1, Los Angeles County 4, Alhambra 1, Long Beach 3, Los Angeles 13, Montebello 1, Pomona 1, San Gabriel 1, Santa Monica 2, South Gate 1, Madera 2, Monterey County 1, Riverside County 1, Sacramento 1, Chula Vista 1, Lodi 1, San Luis Obispo County 1, Santa Rosa 1, Tuolumne County 1, Oxnard 1.

Scarlet Fever

156 cases: Alameda County 1, Oakland 2, Pleasanton 1, Butte County 1, Contra Costa County 6, Richmond 1, Fresno County 5, Fresno 1, Sanger 1, Eureka 1, Kern County 2, Los Angeles County 11, Alhambra 1, Arcadia 1, Burbank 1, Culver City 1, Glendale 4, Long Beach 1, Los Angeles 47, Monrovia 1, Montebello 1, Pasadena 2, San Fernando 1, Whittier 1, South Gate 1, Marin County 1, Mariposa County 1, Merced County 2, Merced 1, Monterey County 3, Orange County 1, Seal Beach 3, Placer County 4, Plumas County 2, Perris 1, Riverside 2, Sacramento County 1, Sacramento 1, San Bernardino County 2, Redlands 1, Oceanside 1, San Diego 5, San Francisco 10, San Joaquin County 3, Tracy 1, Redwood City 3, Santa Barbara 2, Solano County 1, Sonoma County 1, Tulare County 2, Ventura County 1, Santa Paula 1, Ventura 1, Yolo County 1, California 1.*

Smallpox

2 cases: Chico 1, Shasta County 1.

Typhoid Fever

5 cases: Oroville 1, Santa Ana 1, Hemet 1, San Diego 2.

Whooping Cough

720 cases: Alameda County 3, Alameda 7, Albany 3, Berkeley 25, Hayward 3, Livermore 1, Oakland 46, Piedmont 11, Pleasanton 1, Calaveras County 2, Williams 1, Fresno County 8, Fresno 9, Kern County 24, Bakersfield 4, Taft 1, Los Angeles County 67, Arcadia 12, Azusa 1, Compton 1, Glendale 5, Hermosa 1, Huntington Park 3, Inglewood 5, Long Beach 21, Los Angeles 47, Monrovia 9, Montebello 10, Pasadena 14, Pomona 7, San Gabriel 1, Santa Monica 14, South Pasadena 1, Whittier 1, Torrance 4, South Gate 2, Maywood 1, Marin County 3, Merced County 6, Merced 4, Monterey County 20, Orange County 14, Anaheim 4, Brea 1, Huntington Beach 4, Santa Ana 10, Laguna Beach 8, Tustin 2, Riverside County 1, Corona 1, Riverside 1, Palm Springs 4, Sacramento County 2, Sacramento 36, San Bernardino County 24, Redlands 4, San Bernardino 1, San Diego County 28, Chula Vista 1, Coronado 1, La Mesa 1, National City 8, San Diego 49, San Francisco 30, San Joaquin County 15, Lodi 2, Stockton 2, San Luis Obispo County 5, Paso Robles 2, San Luis Obispo 2, San Mateo County 1, Daly City 4, Redwood City 3, San Bruno 4, San Mateo 1, Menlo Park 2, Santa Maria 2, Santa Clara County 4, Palo Alto 1, San Jose 2, Shasta County 1, Siskiyou County 1, Solano County 9, Stanislaus County 9, Modesto 1, Red Bluff 1, Ventura County 2.

Meningitis (Epidemic)

3 cases: Los Angeles 1, Merced 1, San Bernardino County 1.

Dysentery (Amoebic)

6 cases: Los Angeles 1, Maywood 1, Ontario 3, San Francisco 1.

Dysentery (Bacillary)

10 cases: Los Angeles County 2, Los Angeles 4, San Jose 1, Stanislaus County 2, Ventura County 1.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum

One case: San Diego.

Poliomyelitis

4 cases: Calaveras County 1.

Tetanus

2 cases: Riverside County 1, Porterville 1.

Trachoma

One case: San Jose.

Encephalitis (Epidemic)

3 cases: Long Beach 1, San Joaquin County 1, Tulare County 1.

Paratyphoid Fever

5 cases: Los Angeles County 1, Long Beach 1, San Diego 2, Tulare County 1.

Typhus Fever

One case: Chula Vista.

Food Poisoning

10 cases: San Francisco.

Undulant Fever

6 cases: Bakersfield 1, Long Beach 1, Los Angeles 1, Maywood 1, Merced County 1, San Francisco 1.

Coccidioidal Granuloma

One case: Los Angeles.

Septic Sore Throat

2 cases: Butte County 1, Stanislaus County 1.

Epilepsy

38 cases: Fresno 1, Los Angeles County 12, Long Beach 2, Los Angeles 20, Pasadena 1, Napa County 1, Santa Cruz County 1.

Rabies (Animal)

7 cases: Calexico 1, Hanford 1, Los Angeles County 1, Inglewood 1, Los Angeles 1, Porterville 2.

* Cases charged to "California" represent patients ill before entering the State or those who contracted their illness traveling about the State throughout the incubation period of the disease. These cases are not chargeable to any one locality.

